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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the struggle of the University of Redlands (California), a comprehensive liberal arts institution, to come to terms with the diversity represented in its three distinct educational approaches. Each approach attracts faculty with a particular perspective about higher education, and often, these perspectives are in conflict. The paper discusses strategies employed at the university to examine diversity in educational approaches, expand perspectives, and develop a unity of purpose with a diversity of paths. Focus was on four major goals: (1) developing cooperation among faculty with very different views of the institutional mission; (2) encouraging discussion and critical examination of diversity issues to minimize confrontation and maximize respect and understanding; (3) confronting racist and sexist behavior as manifested in the classroom and other areas of campus life; and (4) using scholarly disciplines to study diversity from different perspectives and develop solutions to campus issues. A curricular development project and a project to develop a multicultural perspective involving the larger community, both funded by foundation grants, are described; it is shown that project activities helped faculty to see in direct and personal ways, the importance of diversity issues in their own disciplines, to develop positive ways of confronting racist and sexist behavior on campus, and to perceive that curriculum problems are not simply intellectual concerns but are problems which the community experiences on a daily basis. (LL)

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INVOLVING LIBERAL ARTS FACULTY IN DIVERSITY

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When the word "diversity" is included in a call for proposals or manuscripts, inevitably it is cultural diversity that comes to mind. Diversity, however, can be applied to many kinds of differences. The University of Redlands has been struggling for over twenty years to come to terms with the diversity represented in its three distinct educational approaches. Each approach attracts faculty with a particular perspective about higher education. Often these perspectives are in conflict. Faculty who hold a particular perspective may see that perspective as the only reasonable viewpoint; other views of education serve only to compromise the true values inherent in learning and scholarship. When cultural diversity is added to an already simmering pot, the brew may boil over. The University of Redlands has sought to develop a unity of purpose with a diversity of paths. This paper will discuss some of the strategies we employed to examine diversity issues and expand our perspectives. We focused on four major goals:

1. Developing cooperation among faculty with very different views of the institutional mission,

2. Encouraging discussion and critical examination of diversity issues to minimize confrontation and maximize respect and understanding,

3. Confronting racist and sexist behavior as manifested in the classroom and other areas of campus life,

4. Using scholarly disciplines to study diversity from different perspectives and develop solutions to campus issues.

The University of Redlands is a comprehensive liberal arts institution. It is, in a sense an institution still struggling for its identity and place among institutions of higher education. The institution includes a fairly

traditional college of arts and sciences which is over eighty years old and two relatively young divisions, Johnston Center which was founded in the 1960s as a separate, experimental college and Whitehead Center which was founded in the 1970s essentially as a source of revenue. The College of Arts and Sciences considers itself a traditional liberal arts college yet it encompasses business administration and engineering programs. Johnston provides an individualized education for about 150 students within the College of Arts and Sciences. Johnston students design their own learning contracts, receive evaluations rather than grades, and reside in a living/learning center. Whitehead students are working adults who complete their degrees through a highly structured, accelerated program which offers once-a-week evening classes in a prescribed sequence. The existence of these three approaches to education on a single campus has often caused conflict and distrust because each program attracts faculty with different values and expectations. The diversity of these three constituencies, while a source of tension, is also a source of enrichment on campus. The challenge of the institution is to address the diverse interests of students and faculty and also develop a sense of common mission and community. Institutional issues mirror the larger social challenges of creating a sense of community and enfranchisement for diverse ethnic and economic groups in Southern California. Each program was initially added to the University using the concept of "separate but equal". Later, a new administration determined that all three programs should be integrated using the melting pot theory. When total integration failed, the institution began developing a model of cooperation and

emphasized the unique aspects of each program following the current "salad bowl" theory.

To address the objective of developing coperation among faculty the University has taken several steps. About four years ago the University received a grant from the Irvine Foundation to encourage integration and cooperation among the three programs . Four new faculty were hired and placed in key departments to facilitate the cooperative effort. Faculty taught in the various parts of the university, developed curriculum for the

Whitehead Center and provided faculty development activities for Whitehead Center adjunct faculty. The four departments began a process of curriculum development and faculty development which cut across program lines. While the issues addressed were not those of cultural diversity, the differences were great and the steps toward mediation provided a model for ways in which the institution could address other diversity issues. A first outcome of the project was a discussion of issues on which the three faculties must agree and issues on which they could disagree without feeling that the integrity of the institution had been compromised. An understanding of admissions standards, how they might differ and what needed to be consistent, was a major discussion and led to cooperative work among the traditional and non-traditional programs. The Irvine grant provided funds to offer a faculty development workshop on classroom assessment. Whitehead Center, Johnston Center and College of Arts and Sciences faculty came together to discuss their teaching and evaluation strategies. Such discussions emphasized the common interests of all faculty and the benefits of sharing what each had learned from their work with different student populations. An additional step toward establishing common ground is the appointment of a

University Professor. Next fall the Arts and Sciences Dean will leave his post and become the first University Professor with teaching assignments in all three programs. It is hoped that this professorship will encourage other faculty to explore cross-program teaching. The institution is considering the adoption of this model for future faculty positions. All of these activities have emphasized communication, voluntary involvement in workshops and out-of-department teaching, and exploration of benefits of cooperation. While each program faculty still holds values and perspectives about higher education which may differ from colleagues in other programs, mutual respect and a stronger sense of community are developing.

Two years ago the University received a grant from the Ford Foundation to develop a multicultural perspective in liberal arts classes. The grant will eventually involve about one-half of the entire university faculty in a

workshop on curriculum transformation. About twenty faculty participated in each of three two week workshops. In the last two workshops students were paired with faculty to assist in the curricular transformation. The main activity of the workshop was to redesign the syllabus for one course taught by each participant in order to make the course more culturally inclusive. The workshop organizers were faculty peers. Each faculty participant was paid a stipend of $1000 and given $200 for book purchases. Participation was voluntary. The workshops began with an examination of what is meant by a canon - how important is the canon, how can it be changed, how much really needs to be covered in a course, and is the primary objective of class instruction to develop a process for thinking and learning or to instill information and develop skills? We looked at our courses by using Peggy McIntosh's phases of

curriculur transformation. She suggests that curriculur revision seems to follow five distinct phases. The first phase she calls the "womanless curriculum" where in history, economics, literature or political science there is no mention of the perspectives or issues which might be of concern to women nor any works by women. The second phase, "Women in the discipline," would look at women as exceptions. The few women artists, economists or writers of a particular period might be added to the curriculum. The third phase, "Women as problems, anomolies, or victims." involves students in a study of how women and various ethnic or economic groups have been oppressed. The fourth phase involves studying the lives of women or ethnic groups as part of the discipline. This phase might involve the study of women's journals as literature or as part of the historical record. Religion might be studied from the perspective of its effect on people rather than as theology, or economics might examine the unpaid labor of women. McIntosh sees the fifth phase of curricular transformation as "Disciplines redefined and reconstructed to include us all." Her fifth phase was clearly our goal even though she suggests that it will take one hundred years to achieve it. We did struggle with how a particular perspective has influenced a discipline to determine what research questions are asked, what evidence is considered, what methodology is used, and how evidence is evaluated and interpreted.

As we examined the content of our courses we also realized that the way we teach must change if we are to make our courses more inclusive. We began with the premise that we may perceive differently based on gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, region or affectional orientation and that our location within the social structure may make things more or less visible to us. We felt that recognizing these concepts was essential in

developing an openness to different ways of asking questions, defining issues, or interpreting evidence. As we challenged each other to expand our views we began to understand that there are probably multiple realities to the topics and concepts we discuss in our classes and that most of the knowledge we view as essential may in fact be quite tentative. Such realizations truly challenge one's identity as an expert in one's discipline and reassert the role of professor as learner. When the professor's view of self is that of a learner the classroom becomes more collaborative and the power within the classroom is more equalized. The student participants in the workshop were particularly helpful as faculty re-examined their ideas of power and authority in the classroom. The activities of the Ford Grant helped us to critically examine diversity issues in our curriculum and to develop positive ways of confronting racist and sexist behavior on campus.

In a further effort to reach Peggy McIntosh's stage five of curriculum transformation, we embarked on another activity. We felt that if we used the methodologies of various disciplines represented in the liberal arts to study how issues of diversity are manifested and addressed in our community, we would be able to expand our awareness of diverse issues in our disciplines as well as develop some solutions to campus concerns. The education department formed a team of faculty which included an anthropologist, an historian, a political scientist and a psychologist. Each professor identified an area to investigate and as a group we engaged in several activities. The anthropoligist developed a demographic map of Redlands which showed the patterns of settlement of immigrants and

newcomers and the transitions in neighborhoods. The historian studied the separation of the community into a north side and a south side. The

political scientist interviewed teachers and school administrators, parents and children to study the impact of ESL or bilingual programs on students. The psychologist interviewed mental health providers to determine patterns of usage of different ethnic groups and any differences in mental health concerns. The educators spent whole days in schools and in neighborhoods trying to determine what they might feel like for different groups of students.

Group activities involved focus groups with community leaders and high school and junior high school students to find out how Redlands was handling issues of diversity. The project will conclude with a booklet which will provide a picture of Redlands for teacher education students and case studies which can be used in other classes.

The project uncovered some very interesting information about the impact of so many different cultures and ethnic groups in Redlands schools but it also served to involve faculty in seeing in direct and personal ways the importance of diversity issues in their own disciplines. The study made concrete the phases which Peggy McIntosh talked about in her work on curricular transformation. The study also emphasized that curriculum problems are not simply intellectual concerns bur are problems which the community experiences on a daily basis.

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